

1 **Amendment to the Claims**

2 **In the Claims:**

3 Please add new Claim 48.

4 1. (Previously Presented) An air sensor device configured to collect airborne particles and to
5 evaluate collected airborne particles in order to determine if the collected airborne particles indicate
6 the presence of a biological threat, comprising:

7 a regenerable solid collection surface for supporting a spot of immobilized airborne
8 particles, the regenerable solid collection surface being specifically configured to remove particles
9 from an air stream by impaction of the air stream against the regenerable solid collection surface;

10 means for regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface by removing particles
11 from the regenerable solid collection surface, such that once regenerated, the regenerable collection
12 solid surface can collect additional particles from the air, such that particles collected before
13 regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface are substantially no longer present to
14 contaminate particles collected after regeneration; and

15 means for analyzing the spot of immobilized airborne particles while the particles
16 remain disposed on the regenerable solid collection surface to determine if the spot of immobilized
17 airborne particles represents a biological threat.

18 2. (Canceled)

19 3. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, further comprising a spotting
20 nozzle configured to direct the air stream towards the regenerable solid collection surface, such that a
21 resulting impact of the air stream with the regenerable solid collection surface produces the spot of
22 immobilized airborne particles on the regenerable solid collection surface.

23 4. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the regenerable solid
24 collection surface is part of an impaction plate.

25 5. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the means for analyzing
26 the spot of immobilized airborne particles is selected from the group consisting of a fluorescence
27 detector, a Raman spectrometer, a Fourier transform infrared spectrometer, and a MALDI mass
28 spectrometer.

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1 6. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the means for analyzing
2 the spot of immobilized airborne particles is a fluorescence detector, further comprising an excitation
3 light source configured to emit excitatory radiation that is directed towards the particles collected
4 upon the regenerable solid collection surface, the excitatory radiation having a wavelength that
5 excites any biomolecules comprising the particles to produce a fluorescence radiation to which the
6 fluorescence detector responds.

7 7. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the means for analyzing
8 the spot of immobilized airborne particles detects a biological signature selected from the group
9 consisting of an autofluorescence, a Raman spectrum, an infrared absorption spectrum, and a mass
10 spectrum.

11 8-20. (Canceled)

12 21. (Previously Presented) A method of detecting airborne biological particles, the method
13 comprising:

14 depositing airborne particles on a regenerable solid collection surface provided for
15 supporting a spot of immobilized airborne particles, such that the particles deposited on the
16 regenerable solid collection surface form a spot;

17 measuring a biological signature present in the particles comprising the spot, using a
18 detector configured for sensing the biological signature of the particles, while the particles remain
19 deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;

20 determining a concentration of the immobilized-airborne biological particles from the
21 measurement of the biological signature in order to determine if the biological particles should be
22 considered to represent a potential biological threat; and

23 regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface by removing particles from the
24 regenerable solid collection surface, such that once thus regenerated, the regenerable solid collection
25 surface can collect additional particles from the air, and such that particles collected before
26 regeneration of the regenerable surface are substantially no longer present to contaminate particles
27 collected after the regeneration.

28 22. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 21, wherein the step of
29 depositing results from an inertial impaction of the particles on the regenerable solid collection
30 surface.

1 23. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 21, wherein the biological
2 signature is an autofluorescence.

3 24. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 21, wherein the biological
4 signature is selected from the group consisting of a Raman spectrum, an infrared absorption
5 spectrum, and a mass spectrum.

6 25-28. (Canceled)

7 29. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 6, further comprising a dichroic
8 mirror that substantially reflects the excitatory radiation and is substantially transparent to the
9 fluorescence radiation emitted by the excited biomolecules, the dichroic mirror being positioned to
10 reflect the excitatory radiation towards the particles deposited upon the regenerable solid collection
11 surface.

12 30. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 29, further comprising at least one
13 element selected from the group consisting essentially of:

14 (a) an excitation filter disposed between the excitation light source and the
15 dichroic mirror; and

16 (b) an emission filter disposed between the dichroic mirror and the fluorescence
17 detector.

18 31. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the means for
19 regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface comprises at least one element selected from the
20 group consisting essentially of:

21 (a) a brush that regenerates the regenerable solid collection surface by brushing
22 away particles that were collected on the regenerable solid collection surface;

23 (b) a pad that regenerates the regenerable solid collection surface by pressing
24 against the regenerable solid collection surface while the pad and the regenerable solid collection
25 surface move relative to each other, so as to remove particles that were collected on the regenerable
26 solid collection surface; and

27 (c) a wheel coupled to a motor that regenerates the regenerable solid collection
28 surface by pressing against the regenerable solid collection surface while the motor rotates the wheel,
29 so as to remove particles that were collected on the regenerable solid collection surface.

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1 32. (Previously Presented) The device of Claim 1, wherein the means for regenerating the
2 regenerative solid collection surface comprises at least one element selected from the group consisting
3 essentially of:

4 (a) a nozzle configured to direct a stream of high velocity air towards the
5 regenerative solid collection surface to dislodge the particles deposited thereon;

6 (b) a blade configured to scrape the regenerative solid collection surface to
7 dislodge the particles deposited thereon;

8 (c) means for electrostatically charging the regenerative solid collection surface, so
9 that a static charge disperses the particles that were deposited thereon;

10 (d) means for directing energy to the particles collected upon the regenerative solid
11 collection surface to dislodge the particles deposited thereon; and

12 (e) means for directing energy to the regenerative solid collection surface to
13 dislodge the particles deposited thereon.

14 33. (Previously Presented) The device of Claim 1, further comprising a liquid coating
15 applicator configured to moisten the regenerative solid collection surface prior to collecting the
16 particles, thereby enhancing a collection efficiency of the regenerative solid collection surface.

17 34. (Previously Presented) The device of Claim 1, further comprising a mechanical homing
18 sensor that positions the regenerative solid collection surface relative to at least one additional
19 component selected from the group consisting essentially of:

20 (a) a spotting nozzle configured to deposit a spot of particles on the regenerative
21 solid collection surface;

22 (b) the means for analyzing the spot of immobilized airborne particles;

23 (c) the means for regenerating the regenerative solid collection surface; and

24 (d) a liquid coating applicator used to apply a liquid to the regenerative solid
25 collection surface.

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1 35. (Previously Presented) The device of Claim 1, further comprising a processor configured
2 to implement at least one function selected from the group consisting essentially of:

3 (a) producing an alarm signal if the means for analyzing the spot of immobilized
4 airborne particles indicates that the particles collected on the regenerable solid collection surface are
5 potentially harmful to biological organisms;

6 (b) activating at least one additional component if the means for analyzing the spot
7 of immobilized airborne particles indicates that the particles collected on the regenerable solid
8 collection surface are potentially harmful to biological organisms; and

9 (c) determine a concentration of biological particles collected on the regenerable
10 solid collection surface, and to activate an alarm signal if the processor determines that the
11 concentration of biological particles on the regenerable solid collection surface exceeds a
12 predetermined value.

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1 36. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising a processor coupled
2 to the means for analyzing the spot of immobilized airborne particles, the processor being logically
3 configured to implement at least one function selected from the group consisting essentially of:

4 (a) determine a concentration of particles collected on the regenerable solid
5 collection surface, and to activate an air sampler to obtain a sample of particles from the same general
6 volume of air that provided the particles originally deposited on the regenerable solid collection
7 surface;

8 (b) activating an air sampler to obtain a sample of particles from the same general
9 volume of air that provided the particles originally deposited on the regenerable solid collection
10 surface, if the means for analyzing the spot of immobilized airborne particles indicates that the
11 particles collected on the regenerable solid collection surface are potentially harmful to biological
12 organisms;

13 (c) determine a concentration of particles collected on the regenerable solid
14 collection surface, and to activate an analysis device to collect and analyze a sample of particles from
15 the same general volume of air that provided the particles originally deposited on the regenerable
16 solid collection surface; and

17 (d) activating an air analysis device to obtain and analyze a sample of particles
18 from the same general volume of air that provided the particles originally deposited on the
19 regenerable solid collection surface, if the means for analyzing the spot of immobilized airborne
20 particles indicates that the particles collected on the regenerable solid collection surface are
21 potentially harmful to biological organisms.

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1 37. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, further comprising the steps of:

2 (a) comparing the concentration of immobilized airborne biological particles
3 against predetermined criteria indicative of a potential alarm condition; and

4 (b) if the concentration of immobilized airborne biological particles equals or
5 exceeds the predetermined criteria, responding by implementing at least one step selected from the
6 group of steps consisting essentially of:

7 (i) activating an alarm signal directed to alert a designated party;

8 (ii) manipulating an air management component;

9 (iii) producing a warning signal;

10 (iv) activating an air sampler to collect a sample of particles from the same
11 general area that provided the airborne particles deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;
12 and

13 (v) moving a damper in an air duct.

14 38. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein the step of regenerating the
15 collection surface comprises at least one step selected from the group of steps consisting essentially
16 of:

17 (a) brushing the regenerable solid collection surface, to dislodge the particles
18 deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;

19 (b) pressing a pad against the regenerable solid collection surface while there is
20 relative motion between the pad and the regenerable solid collection surface, to remove the particles
21 deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;

22 (c) pressing a wheel against the regenerable solid collection surface while there is
23 relative motion between the wheel and the regenerable solid collection surface, to remove the
24 particles deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;

25 (d) directing a stream of high velocity air towards the regenerable solid collection
26 surface to dislodge the particles deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;

27 (e) electrostatically charging the regenerable solid collection surface to
28 electrostatically disperse the particles deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface; and

29 (f) directing energy to the particles collected upon the regenerable solid collection
30 surface to dislodge the particles deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface.

39-42. (Canceled)

43. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, further comprising a particle counter configured to determine an amount of airborne particles.

44. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 43, where the particle counter is capable of reporting a present value of particle counts in at least one predetermined size range.

45. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 35, wherein the additional component comprises at least one component selected from the group consisting essentially of an adjacently positioned aerosol sampler and an adjacently positioned aerosol analyzer.

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1 46. (Previously Presented) An air sensor device configured to collect airborne particles and
2 to evaluate collected airborne particles in order to determine if the collected airborne particles
3 indicate the presence of a biological threat, comprising:

4 (a) a regenerable solid collection surface means for supporting a spot of
5 immobilized airborne particles, and for removing particles from an air stream by impaction of the air
6 stream against the regenerable solid collection surface;

7 (b) a surface regenerator for automatically regenerating the regenerable solid
8 collection surface by removing particles from the regenerable solid collection surface, such that once
9 regenerated, the regenerable collection solid surface can collect additional particles from the air, such
10 that particles collected before regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface are substantially
11 no longer present to contaminate particles collected after the regeneration, the surface regenerator
12 comprising at least one structure selected from a group consisting of:

13 (i) a brush that regenerates the regenerable solid collection surface by
14 brushing away particles that were collected on the regenerable solid collection surface;

15 (ii) a pad that regenerates the regenerable solid collection surface by
16 pressing against the regenerable solid collection surface while the pad and the regenerable solid
17 collection surface move relative to each other, so as to remove particles that were collected on the
18 regenerable solid collection surface; and

19 (iii) a wheel coupled to a motor that regenerates the regenerable solid
20 collection surface by pressing against the regenerable solid collection surface while the motor rotates
21 the wheel, so as to remove particles that were collected on the regenerable solid collection surface;
22 and

23 (c) sensing means for determining if the spot of immobilized airborne particles
24 represents a biological threat.

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1 47. (Previously Presented) A method of detecting airborne biological particles, the method
2 comprising the steps of:

3 (a) depositing airborne particles on a regenerable solid collection surface provided
4 for supporting a spot of immobilized airborne particles, such that the particles deposited on the
5 regenerable solid collection surface form a spot;

6 (b) subsequently, measuring a biological signature present in the particles
7 comprising the spot, using a detector configured for sensing the biological signature of the particles,
8 while the particles remain deposited on the regenerable solid collection surface;

9 (c) determining a concentration of the immobilized airborne biological particles
10 from the measurement of the biological signature in order to determine if the biological particles
11 should be considered to represent a potential biological threat; and

12 (d) regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface by removing particles
13 from the regenerable solid collection surface after step (c), so that once thus regenerated, the
14 regenerable solid collection surface can collect additional particles from the air, such that particles
15 collected before regeneration of the regenerable surface are substantially no longer present to
16 contaminate particles collected after the regeneration.

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1 48. (New) An air sensor device configured to collect airborne particles and to evaluate
2 collected airborne particles in order to determine if the collected airborne particles indicate the
3 presence of a biological threat, comprising:

4 a regenerable solid collection surface for supporting a spot of immobilized airborne
5 particles, the regenerable solid collection surface being specifically configured to remove particles
6 from an air stream by impaction of the air stream against the regenerable solid collection surface;

7 means for regenerating the regenerable solid collection surface by removing particles
8 from the regenerable solid collection surface without removing the regenerable solid collection
9 surface from the air sensor device, such that once regenerated, the regenerable collection solid
10 surface can collect additional particles from the air, such that particles collected before regenerating
11 the regenerable solid collection surface are substantially no longer present to contaminate particles
12 collected after regeneration; and

13 means for analyzing the spot of immobilized airborne particles while the particles
14 remain disposed on the regenerable solid collection surface without removing the regenerable solid
15 collection surface from the air sensor device, to determine if the spot of immobilized airborne
16 particles represents a biological threat.